Office Use of Social Media

383.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE
This policy provides guidelines to ensure that any use of social media on behalf of the Office is consistent with the office mission.

This policy does not address all aspects of social media use. Specifically, it does not address:

- Personal use of social media by office members (see the Employee Speech, Expression and Social Networking Policy).

- Use of social media in personnel processes (see the Recruitment and Selection Policy).

- Use of social media as part of a criminal investigation, other than disseminating information to the public on behalf of this office (see the Investigation and Prosecution Policy).

383.1.1 DEFINITIONS
Definitions related to this policy include:

Social media - Any of a wide array of internet-based tools and platforms that allow for the sharing of information, such as the office website or social networking services.

383.2 POLICY
The Kitsap County Sheriff's Office may use social media as a method of effectively informing the public about department services, issues, investigations and other relevant events.

Department members shall ensure that the use or access of social media is done in a manner that protects the constitutional rights of all.

For additional guidance on proper use of Department authorized social media outlets, agency members should refer to the Kitsap County Sheriff's Office social media plan.

383.3 AUTHORIZED USERS
Only personnel specifically designated by the Sheriff will be authorized to post, comment and/or respond to comments on any of the agency's social media websites. Those designated by the Sheriff will be referred to as social media administrators.

Department designated social media administrators shall use only department-approved equipment during the normal course of duties to post and monitor department-related social media, unless they are specifically authorized to do otherwise by their supervisors.

The Sheriff may develop specific guidelines identifying the type of content that may be posted. Any content that does not strictly conform to the guidelines shall be approved by a Department designated social media administrator.

Requests to post information over department social media by members who are not authorized to post shall be made through department designated social media administrators.

383.4 AUTHORIZED CONTENT

Only content that is appropriate for public release, that supports the office mission, and that conforms to all office policies regarding the release of information may be posted.

Examples of appropriate content include:

(a)   Announcements.

(b)   Tips and information related to crime prevention.

(c)   Investigative requests for information.

(d)   Requests that ask the community to engage in projects that are relevant to the office mission.

(e)   Real-time safety information that is related to in-progress crimes, geographical warnings, or disaster information.

(f)   Traffic information.

(g)   Media releases.

(h)   Recruitment of personnel.

Authorized members shall review all content prior to posting to ensure that the posting does not contain prohibited content.

383.4.1   INCIDENT-SPECIFIC USE

In instances of active incidents where speed, accuracy and frequent updates are paramount (e.g., crime alerts, public safety information, traffic issues), the Public Information Officer or the authorized designee will be responsible for the compilation of information to be released, subject to the approval of the Incident Commander.

In the event of a rapidly developing incident, the PIO or authorized designee may ask partner agencies to post relevant information onto their social media sites in order to quickly disseminate information should there be a delay in posting it to the department's social media sites. Examples of partner agencies include; CenCom, Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management, Washington State Patrol and local fire and police agencies.

383.5   PROHIBITED CONTENT

Content that is prohibited from posting includes, but is not limited to:

(a)   Content that is abusive, discriminatory, inflammatory or sexually explicit.

(b)   Any information that violates individual rights, including confidentiality and/or privacy rights and those provided under state, federal or local laws.

(c)   Any information that could compromise an ongoing investigation.

(d)   Any information that could tend to compromise or damage the mission, function, reputation or professionalism of the Kitsap County Sheriff's Office or its members.

(e)   Any information that could compromise the safety and security of department operations, members of the Department, victims, suspects or the public.

(f)   Any content posted for personal use.

(g)   Any content that has not been properly authorized by this policy or a supervisor.

Any member who becomes aware of content on this department's social media site that he/she believes is unauthorized or inappropriate should promptly report such content to a supervisor who will contact a department designated social media administrator as soon as practicable.

383.5.1 PUBLIC POSTING PROHIBITED
Department social media sites shall be designed and maintained to prevent posting of content by the public.

383.6 MONITORING CONTENT
The KCSO Office of Public Affairs shall be responsible for oversight and monitoring of Department social media sites to ensure that they are in compliance with Department policy and the Department social media plan.

383.7 RETENTION OF RECORDS
The Office of Public Affairs should work with the Dissemination and Records Unit to establish a method of ensuring that public records generated in the process of social media use are retained in accordance with established records retention schedules.

383.8 TRAINING
Department approved social media administrators should receive training that, at a minimum, addresses legal issues concerning the appropriate use of social media sites, as well as privacy, civil rights, dissemination and retention of information posted on department sites.